



## Post Surgery Instructions *Hallux Valgus (Bunion) Correction*

### General Treatment Facts

- The goal of this surgery is to decrease pain, improve your alignment, and improve function.
- During this operation, the metatarsal (toe) bone is cut and shifted in order to straighten the toe. The big toe ligaments are loosened on one side and tightened on the other side in order to help keep the toe in a straighter position.
- You will be able to walk on the heel and outside of the foot the day of surgery while wearing a postoperative shoe and with the use of crutches.
- You will experience significant swelling in the foot after surgery. This can last up to 4 to 6 months. The more that you elevate the foot and limit your walking in the first 2 weeks, the better your swelling and pain will be.
- The postoperative shoe must be worn for 6-12 weeks.
- You will not be able to drive until 6 weeks if it is your right foot.

### Post Surgery Course

#### Day 1

- The foot will be wrapped with lots of padding and placed in a surgical shoe. You may be placed in a plaster splint instead.
- Please do not remove the dressing. If for any reason the dressing is too tight, loosen it and re-apply it to your comfort level.
- It is important to ice and elevate the foot, take pain medication, and rest as needed.
- Expect numbness in the foot for 4-12 hours and then anticipate the onset of pain.
- You may weight bear only on the outside and heel of your foot unless otherwise told by Dr. Dekker.
- Do not get the toe or dressing wet.
- Move the ankle, knee, hip, and upper extremities.

#### Day 4

- Pain should be better after the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. If your pain worsens after day 3 or you have a fever and/or chills, please call the office.
- Wiggle toes and move foot around in shoe as tolerated.

#### Day 14 (approximately)

- First post-operative visit in the office.
- Your dressing will be taken off and your sutures will be removed. If you were put in a splint it will be removed in the office by Dr. Dekker's team.

- Dr. Dekker will wrap your foot and big toe. This will be done for 8 weeks post-operatively. Keep this wrap on while you are awake and sleeping. Please keep it dry.
- You will continue to ambulate in the surgical shoe on the heel and outside of the foot only.
- Your activity level will be about 20 to 30% of your normal activity level.
- You will NOT be able to put weight on the foot in order to do exercises on a bike, but you CAN put weight on the heel.
- If the incision is healing well and there are no pins sticking out of your toes, you may begin to get the foot wet in the shower 2-3 days after your first postoperative visit.

### **3 weeks**

- If the incision is healed and there are no pins sticking out of your toes, you may submerge the toe under water.
- Gentle range of motion of the big toe is encouraged.
- Gentle exercise on a stationary bike is permitted.
- Continue to wear the postoperative shoe and do not roll through the front of the foot.

### **6 weeks**

- Walking flat on the foot with the postoperative shoe is permitted.
- If cleared by Dr. Dekker, you may drive in a supportive rigid sole shoe.
- Avoid walking on uneven or rocky terrain.
- If you have pins in your toes, they are usually pulled at this visit. You can get the foot wet 2-3 days after your pins are pulled.
- You can exercise on a bike as long as it's on the arch of the foot.

### **8 weeks**

- Wean out of the postoperative shoe and into a comfortable rigid sole sneaker.
- It is normal to still be experiencing foot swelling at and beyond this point. You may require a shoe that is one to two sizes larger than your normal size. Otherwise, you may need to loosen your shoelaces to accommodate the swelling.

### **12 weeks**

- Walking through the foot with a rigid sole sneaker is typically permitted.
- Increase activity as tolerated.